

The Honorable James D. Peterson, Judge

U.S. District Court

120 N. Henry Street

Madison, WI 53703

December 11, 2021

Judge Peterson,

My name is Anne Greener. I was Brett Blomme's court clerk for seven months, from August 2020 to March 2021, at the Juvenile Justice Center in Milwaukee County. As we developed a working relationship during that time, I saw nothing less than professionalism from him. He treated all persons, whether they were parties in a court hearing or staff in the courthouse, with compassion and dignity. I know I didn't know him for a very long time, but even in that brief time, I saw a very good and decent human being. He spoke of his husband, children, and family members daily, sharing stories and anecdotes from normal family life.

In addition to Mr. Blomme's work in the courts, he has volunteered his time to make his community a better place. Mr. Blomme was involved in community organizations that supported worthwhile causes.

I know there is a mandatory five-year sentence, and I also know you have the discretion to go much higher than the five years, which I beg you not to do. If I could have done anything to help him prevent this from happening, I certainly would have.

I can only imagine how much he misses his family every day. I miss him as well. My heart goes out to him as the days, weeks, and even months have gone by, and he is absent from holidays, birthdays, and other special occasions.

Please, Judge Peterson, show Mr. Blomme mercy in his sentencing as he has been a good person, doing good things throughout his life. I am not sure whether a longer sentence is necessary or beneficial, as Mr. Blomme will need to address the things that led him to this place in his life.

In closing, I would just like to say that after this all took place back in March, I truly felt like I lost a friend. Despite the current case, I still believe Mr. Blomme to be an honorable individual, a valuable member to my community, and a good human being.

Sincerely,

Anne Greener

Anne Greener

Honorable James D. Peterson
Judge, U.S. District Court
120 N. Henry Street
Madison, WI 53703

December 12, 2021

Your Honor,

I'm writing to share my testimony on the character of Brett Blomme. My name is Amy Blomme and I am the younger sister of the man being presented you.

Growing up, Brett excelled at most of the things he pursued - he was a decorated athlete, musician and was surrounded by great friends. I of course was jealous of the attention he received. He lived with the drive and passion so common in older siblings.

Brett fought hard to achieve his success – both in his career and personal life. His life with his husband, Chris and two children, Caleb and Sophia, was intentional. Brett and Chris were married and quickly started the process to become foster parents. Brett and Chris' path to parenthood showed their capacity to love unconditionally. They navigated the foster care and adoption processes with strength and courage to eventually welcome the two children that made me the 'fun aunt' I always wanted to be.

They not only welcomed Caleb and Sophia into their family with huge hearts, but also the children's biological families. Brett made it clear that for better or worse, Caleb and Sophia's biological families are now their family. This meant that Caleb had photos of his biological family in his room and has created a tradition of baking cookies with his grandmother. Sophia talks about her half siblings and her mother. Sharing this part of their stories gives Caleb and Sophia the security that they are loved and chosen for their family.

Over the years, Brett found a path working within the justice system. He once described his job to me as the person who is there to help people when they are at their lowest point. He always approached the people he represented as the human beings they are. He worked with the understanding that humans are imperfect and no matter who you are or what you've done, everyone deserves a fair and equal opportunity within the justice system. I see my brother now as one of those humans deserving of the fair and equal treatment in the justice system he helped many before him find. I know that you must sentence him to at least five years. I also know that the government will ask for more. I beg for you to please allow him to get back to his family as soon as possible.

The awful crime that Brett committed has had a deep impact on everyone that loves him. We have all processed and grieved and managed big emotions surrounding it. I am proud to say that my parents and two other brothers have all displayed the bond that makes families special. We have all shown our unconditional love and support, just as Brett exemplified with his own family. Brett has shown remorse and expressed that he is ready to take responsibility for his actions. I truly believe he will make the most of his time incarcerated and do everything he can to prepare himself to return to his family as the best version of himself.

Sincerely,



Amy Blomme

December 8, 2021

Honorable James D. Peterson
Judge, U.S. District Court
120 N. Henry Street
Madison, WI 53703

Your Honor,

I'm Brett Blomme's brother-in-law. Although I've only known Brett for a few years, it's very clear that he's a smart and caring individual. He's always treated me with love and respect. Coming into the family, Brett went out of his way to make me feel welcome during family holidays and trips. He has always shown me an unwavering amount of support whether it was related to my career or in my role as a new dad this year.

Brett is a good person with a great heart who committed a terrible crime. Since March, my wife and I have spoken to Brett weekly. I have witnessed his efforts to come to terms with his actions and I hear the remorse in his voice. He is eager to make things right. He is always trying to be helpful, even while in jail. For example, he started teaching yoga and breathing sessions to the other inmates. I know you must sentence him to at least five years. I sincerely hope this is all you choose for him. I know he's eager to serve his time and reclaim his life with his family.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Jerry Pentecost

22996 County Road 554
Memphis, MO 63555

December 14, 2021

Honorable James D. Peterson,
Judge, U.S. District Court
120 N. Henry Street
Madison WI 53703

Your Honor:

My name is Katie Howard and I am writing to you in regards to Brett Blomme's upcoming sentencing. I met Brett 3 and a half years ago when I started dating his brother, Bryce. In this time, Brett and the rest of the Blomme family have welcomed me and treated me as one of their own. While I have not known Brett for as long as others, I do know how important family is to him and how much his family needs him.

Since I have known him, Brett has always treated those around him with kindness and respect. He is always quick to lend a hand to someone in need and offer help in any way he can. There has never been a moment where I have questioned his character.

I fully understand that Brett is being sentenced for a very serious crime, one that has caused shock and a great deal of hurt for all involved, and that he must go to prison for the minimum of 5 years. I also understand that this sentence can be much longer. I am asking you to please allow Brett the chance to show society and those closest to him that this is not the person he is by giving him the minimum sentence. Brett has done so much good in his life and I believe that he is still a good person.

Thank you for your consideration,

/s/

Katie Howard



Friday, December 10, 2021

Honorable James D. Peterson, Judge
U.S. District Court
120 N. Henry Street
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Judge Peterson,

I have known Brett Blomme for almost nine years, since I became pastor at Covenant Presbyterian Church in 2013, where Brett was already a member. Since then, I've had dinner at their home, officiated at the blessing of their marriage, served with him on committees, ordained him as an Elder, went to a three-day conference in Kansas City, baptized their children, and had several video visits since his arrest.

Like other people here at church, I was deeply saddened by the news of his crime. He and I have discussed it, and he seems genuinely sorry. I shared a book on getting free of pornography and finding new direction in life, which we have discussed. He and I have discussed how he can move forward in a positive way once he is out of jail.

I understand that he must be sentenced for his crime, but I hope you can show leniency given his strong desire to change and start life anew.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dr. Charles H. Berthoud, Senior Pastor

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Dear Honorable James D. Peterson,

I am writing in regard to Brett Blomme. My name is Mallory Blomme and I am his sister-in-law. I have known Brett for 12 years now. Brett and I have been very close since the day we met. Brett always made me feel very comfortable and welcomed when we had family gatherings. I have seen how hard Brett has worked by attending his graduation ceremony for Mizzou and also by seeing how he's moved up over the years with each new job and position he worked so hard to get. When I see Brett with his children, Sophia and Caleb, you can just see the love he has for those two. I understand Brett will be sentenced for a serious crime, but I just ask to please show some mercy and any possible leniency with his sentencing time. Brett has done so many good things in his life and we just want him home and to be back with his family.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Mallory Blomme

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12-10-2021

Honorable Judge James D Peterson
Judge, US District Court
1120 N. Henry Street
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Sir,

My name is Barbara Blomme, Mother of 4 children, Brett is our eldest, Amy, Grant and Bryce. We live in Memphis, MO and run our family cattle farm and small business, Scotland County Livestock, Sale Barn.

Brett has always been a good Son, Brother and Uncle. Very caring, loving and very present in our lives. We have always been very proud of him and his accomplishments, but never more than his marriage to Chris and his adoption of two children, Caleb, 9 and Sophia Jo, 7. We love being Grandparents and have NEVER EVER witnessed any improper behavior. He and Chris are excellent parents. I always say, I'm not sure who is more blessed, the children or the parents and Grandparents for bringing them to us. We have witnessed Brett's interaction with people, young and old, and never saw anything to give us pause.

We know that Brett is going to be sentenced for a very serious crime. Brett has obviously lost a lot, we all have, as a family. His ability to be present in the lives of his children

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his spouse, his siblings and us. Missed funeral
weddings and soon birth of his third niece.
The shock, publicly and privately, has been
difficult for us all. Most of all for Brett,
he worked so hard for his accomplishments.

I would like to say, we as a family,
are going to be here to support Brett and
Chris, Caleb and Sophia as we all work
through healing from this crime. We love
our son unconditionally. Please show Brett
mercy and any possible leniency. Brett has done
a lot of good for others who struggle and we
believe he will continue to do so. Brett is so
very sorry for his actions.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Barbara Blomme

Honorable James D. Peterson.
Judge
U.S. District Court
120 N. Henry Street
Madison, WI 53703

December 12, 2021

Your Honor,

Thank you for taking the time to read my comments. My name is Jerry Blomme and I am the father of Brett Blomme. Brett says you are a fair man. All I can hope for is that you consider all things and make the right sentence.

Brett did wrong and has to pay for it. I believe he is paying for it, will pay for it and continue to pay for it for the rest of his life. He knows what he did is wrong and is very sorry for his actions. A person can't change what he did, but what he did can change a person. Brett has indicated to me he has changed and hopes he will get the chance to be a better person.

I am aware that you know how much his family needs him. I lost my dad when I was eight years old. My mother told me many times how hard it was raising up kids by herself. Chris, Brett's spouse, is a great person and I'm sure he would agree with me in saying, Brett's help is needed. Please help us get our family back together as soon as possible. Brett has always been one to help other people and has made a life at it.

As his Dad I have tried to be there for him when he needed me. Recently while waiting for his sentencing at the county jail, he became very depressed and felt really bad about what he did and where his life was going. In one of our conversations I mentioned to him, jail can take everything from you but your spirit. Don't lose that. So I said do what you do. Help people. The next time we talked, I asked him how things were going and he told me things were better. He said he had started looking for ways to help other people and found many opportunities. There are people that have needed help reading, writing and math and just learning our language. Some people just needed a person to talk to. I said, Brett – you have always helped people, so there is no need to stop now. There are more stories like this one.

Brett has so much more good in him than bad. I know what he did was very wrong and he has to pay for it. I also believe locking him up for five years is not needed. I have always been proud of my son for what he has done and very ashamed of him for what he did. And I'm looking forward to watching him get back on the right path and to doing what he does best – helping people. I hope this letter has helped a little in making a decision on my son's future.

Sincerely,


Jerry Blomme

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December 14, 2021

Re: Brett Blomme

Dear Judge Peterson,

I am writing to you today to share my support for Brett Blomme. My name is Chris Verhaeghe and I am Brett's husband, we have been together for over a decade and were married in 2013. We have two adopted kids, Caleb and Sophia, and are active members of our community both here in Madison and Milwaukee. It is hard to write this letter to you; how do you encapsulate everything you know about someone you love in a page? So I will try to highlight what you should know about Brett. He is a good man, loving father, and caring husband. The activity he was engaged in is not representative of the man I know and comes from a dark moment in his life. He has taken responsibility for his actions and is deeply sorry for the impact this has had on me and the kids. I know if he could go back, he would change his behavior and put his family above all else.

Brett continues to be a loving and caring father despite being detained. Brett has always had a strong bond with the kids since we started fostering them. He was often the one to get on the floor and play Legos with our son, braid our daughter's hair and paint her nails, or take them outside for a bike ride. He continues to connect with the kids almost every night, often reading them bedtime stories over video calls. He is also sending letters and coloring pictures for them almost every week. Brett is committed to being the best father he can be given the circumstances. The kids still struggle with his absence and to understand why their dad can't come home, but Brett continues to be reassuring and helping them navigate their difficult feelings. More than anything, Brett wants our kids to be okay. We have talked several times about how he took for granted the family he has and wants to make sure he never does that again. Oddly, this experience has brought Brett closer to me and the kids in many ways.

Brett has always been a caring and loving partner. Brett and I share many values and what attracted me the most to him was his drive and ambition. He was motivated to advance his career and find success for his family. We worked well together as a team often prioritizing his career over mine while still finding ways to support me. We both wanted to have kids and create a family together and we thought foster care was the best route to achieve that goal. Since then we have navigated the challenges of being a parent together and as a unified team. As gay male parents, we had very few role models to learn from and often had to blaze our own path. Brett has always been a source of strength for me and has helped me be a better father and partner. (I want to acknowledge that we have an open relationship and while this may seem strange to some it works for us. I share this so you know I was aware of and supportive of Brett having additional relationships with other consenting adults and it wasn't devious indiscretion on his part.)

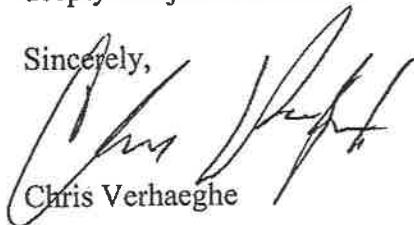
The last piece I want to share is some context of what happened in the fall of 2020. I'm sure Brett will share what was going on in his mind at the time, but I want you to know what I observed. Throughout COVID Brett was suffering from significant depression. I encouraged him many times to find the help that he needed. He was drinking almost every day, living apart from his family most of the week, and in a new job that put significant strain on his mental health. I saw the impact on him and worried about him many times. Brett has never thought he was good enough, and while this can be a great motivator it can also cause significant doubt and strain on one's health. I saw how starting in his new role just amplified the doubt that he wasn't good enough. I share this mainly to show you how all of these factors, layered on top of a pandemic isolated from friends and family, banded together created a pretty dark place for Brett. And, while many of us tried to help him in that dark place, no one seemed to be able to break through.

I would ask and beg you for as much leniency as you are allowed in this case. As a family, we are ready to have Brett back home as soon as possible. Brett's contributions as a father and a partner are incalculable. While I understand it is important for Brett to be punished for his crime to deter others, I hope and pray that you give him only the bare minimum needed, in your considered view, as there is nothing productive or therapeutic nor beneficial to society if he is held in prison one day longer than is minimally necessary on your seasoned view. He poses no danger to anyone if he resides under supervision and treatment when returned to the community. As you may know, Brett has already started to experience the ramifications of his actions (losing most of our friends, not being physically there to help as a parent, losing his career and reputation, and enduring continued public shame in the media.) We all want to move forward and figure out how to rebuild our lives so our kids can find the success they deserve.

Finally, I have one thing to ask as you consider Brett's sentence. Please help Brett get access to any programs for inmates struggling with alcohol and mental health. Brett has a lot to work through. Both pose major challenges to Brett. I know he is ready to start now and work hard to be a better person.

I truly appreciate you taking the time to read this and know that Caleb, Sophia, and I love Brett deeply and just want him to be okay.

Sincerely,



Chris Verhaeghe

(Brett's Husband)